
THE
SERMON
AT THE
CORONATION
OF
K. WILLIAM and Q. MARY.

.....

112

112

112

.....

112

.....

.....

Sup.

15.

A
SERMON

Preached at the
CORONATION
OF
WILLIAM III. and MARY II.
King and Queen

OF
England, - - - - France, and Ireland,
DEFENDERS of the Faith;

IN THE
Abby Church of Westminster, April 11. 1689.

By GILBERT Lord Bishop of Salisbury.

Printed by Their Majesties Special Command.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. Starker; and Ric. Chiswell, at the
Rose and Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard. MDCLXXXIX.

2 SAM. XXIII. 3, 4.

*The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake to me:
He that ruleth over men, must be just, ruling in the
fear of the Lord*

*And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the Sun
riseth; even a morning without clouds; as the tender
grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after
rain.*



Tis the peculiar glory of Humane Nature, that Man is made after the Image of God: and therefore the distinctions of Honour among Men, ought to be taken from the Characters of the Divine Nature and Perfections that appear in them. Higher degrees of Capacity bring men so much the nearer to the Infinite Compass of that Eternal Mind. The Elevations of Greatness, are approaches to that unbounded Power to which all things are subject. Yet, though there is somewhat in these which is apt to strike the World with admiration, there is another resemblance of the Divinity which has a more peculiar beauty in it, that consists in Justice and Goodness. The other may subdue the World, but this only overcomes mens hearts, and triumphs over their Thoughts, as much as the Greatest Monarch can do over their Persons. Power without Goodness is the justest Object of mens fear and aversion; and every man is on his guard against Wisdom, when it is not guided by Justice. An Elevation of Condition, without a more real Dignity inherent in the mind, is only the exposing of those who are cloathed with that ill deserved Greatness to a brighter light, and more observation, by which their Defects, which might have passed without any unkind Comments made on them, if they had lived in a greater obscurity, become the more Conspicuous, and are by consequence the more censured. Those who are raised up to a

high Eminence of Dignity, are so much the more accountable both to God and man, not only for all the Ill which either they themselves, or others acting in their Name, or by their Example may have done, but likewise for all the Good which they might have done but did not. And as they have much to answer for to God, so likewise men expect much from them; and will be severe in exacting that, to which they think they have so just a right. God will indeed forgive their Errors, if they repent of them; but men will not be so merciful. They will vent their Indignation, if they cannot on their Persons, yet at least on their Memories. The Flatterers of the *Roman* Emperors were not more Ingenious in Inventing new Rites of Divine Adoration to their Arrogant Masters, during their lives, than their Oppressed Subjects were to find out peculiar marks of Infamy for the loading their Memories after their death. And it is certain, That as the Memory of Good Princes shall be in *everlasting remembrance*; so the Memory of Bad ones shall either quite *perish*, or shall *rot*; either they shall be quite forgotten, or they shall be remembered indeed, but it shall be with all possible scorn and horror.

Therefore it is that *David* being to leave these as his *last words* to all posterity, as well as to *Solomon*, and such as should descend from him; and intending to put all the weight in them, that could be in words, he introduces them with much pomp, to give them the more authority. It is not only said, that these are *his last words*, tho that must naturally create respect, especially when it is a King that speaks after long Experience; and a Reign as full of all varieties of Accidents as any is in History; But Attention is also here raised by a Poetical redoubling of many lofty Expressions. *David, the Son of Jesse, said, the man that was raised up on high the Anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel, said.* And because the Instruction that was to be given, was too Important to rest upon a Human Authority, how eminent soever it might be, another set of Expressions that are yet more sublime, comes after these. *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue: The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me: He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord.* Here are the true measures of Government; it is a *Rule*, and not an Absolute Dominion; it is a *Rule over men*, and not a *Power*, like that which we have over Beasts. In a word, it is the Conduct of free and reasonable Beings,

Beings, who need indeed to be governed, but ought not to be broken by the force and weight of Power.

Those who manage this Power, and Rule over Men, *must be just*, and act according to those Eternal and Unalterable Rules of Truth and Goodness, which are both included in the word *Just*. This is Universal, and binds all Princes equally; but such as have the advantages of a more particular Revelation of the Will of God, come under another Obligation, of *Ruling in his fear*, and of administering that Authority which is put in their hands, according to that light with which he has blest them.

These words contain the Duty, and give the Character of a good Prince; and those which follow, set forth the Happiness of such a Government, from two very natural Figures, which are apt to make great Impressions on us: A temperate Air, and a clear Sky; a fair Morning, and an unclouded Sun, are things which do not only please, but animate; they quicken and exhilarate our Spirits, and a kindly Spring, in which all the Productions of the Earth shoot out abundantly upon the due intermixtures of Rain and Sun, of Heat and Moisture, gives the Earth a new Face, and a new Life to all that dwell upon it.

And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the Sun riseth; even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.

These being Blessings which all Men feel, and in which every Man rejoices; it was a very natural Piece of Rhetorick, to set forth the Happiness of a good Government under such Figures.

This then which is so Elegantly commended to us, is a *Rule*, and a *Rule over men*. It is a *Rule*, and not an Arbitrary Power, without Laws and Measures. Man is indeed born free, and so he has a Right to Liberty; but he is born likewise with so much frailty in his Composition, that he wants Conduct, and must be kept under Rule. It is a Question not easily determined, whether a State of Liberty, without any restraint, that leaves all Men to a full freedom of acting as they please; or a State of Restraint, that shuts out all Liberty, is the more miserable of the two. The one subdues whole Nations to the Humours of one flattered and abused Tyrant; and the other exposes Men to the Frauds and Violences of all their Neighbours; this keeps all Men in a constant State of War, and that

that makes them languish under a base depression of Spirit. In one word, the one makes Men Beasts of Prey, and the other makes them Beasts of Burden. The Mean between these two Extrems, is a Just Government, that conducts those who are under it, by constant and fixed Rules, that limits Men Rights, and restrains their Passions; that subdues the Haughty, and protects the Humble; that assures to every Man both his just Birth-rights, and the fruits of his Industry; and, to sum up all, that renders every Man safe, and that puts him in a way to make himself happy. Without this, Man-kind would grow into so much disorder, that the World would become a Desert, and Life it self would be a Misery, if to live without all Rule over Men, were the Condition of living. A firm and steady, an equal and uniform, but above all, a just Government, changes the whole Scene; every man feels that he is secure, and sees how he may be happy: and unless the whole Government falls under a General Distress, no man can be miserable without Remedy, but through his own fault. This is the Sum of all the Happiness that can be expected from Government: But as it is a Rule, and not a sullen Authority; so it is a *Rule over Men*, suitable to the Principles of Reason, to the Nature of Man, and to the Ends of Civil Society. To govern by Humour or Willfulness, either shewing an unreasonable Stiffness, in adhering too sullenly to received Maxims, or an unfixed Levity, that has no measures, to impose things meerly because those in Authority will shew their Power, and will be obeyed; to put the Frailties of Men to trials in their Obedience, that are above Humane Patience; to exact of them that which is either impossible or unreasonable, and to carry this Rule too far into that which is God's Immediate Province, I mean, *Mens Consciences*: All this is not the Ruling over Men, either as Men or as Christians: God himself has made *his Yoke easie*, and therefore those who can pretend no higher than to be his Vicegerents, should not exceed those Limits, within which the Author of our Being has restrained himself. Undue Impositions, and unrelenting Severities; a Rigour in Commanding, and a Cruelty in Punishing, must find Patterns elsewhere, then in Gods Governing the World, or in Christs Governing the Church. Happy we, who are delivered from both Extrems; who neither lie under the Terror of a Despotick Power, nor are cast loose to the wildness of ungovern'd Multitudes; who neither groan under the Tyranny of Inqui-
fitors,

sitors, nor the Madness of Lawless Men; and whose Laws are neither writ on Sand, nor with blood; neither easie to be defaced, nor cruel in their Execution.

But how well tempered soever our Constitution may be, nothing can compleat our happiness, but the Justice of those who rule over us: Then may we reckon our selves really happy, when they are truly *Just*; *Just*, I say, to their People, and to themselves; to their Laws, and to their own Words and Promises, chiefly to such as is the Sacred Oath of this Great Day; and when they are so exactly scrupulous in point of Truth, that all men see, that there is no part of the Government so unalterable as their Faith is: *Just* likewise to every one of their Subjects, sheltering them all under an Impartial Protection; neither perverting Justice themselves, nor suffering it to be perverted, as far as in them lies, by any that act in their Name; and resolving to make severe Examples of all that they can discover, who make them the Patrons of their Oppression: *Just* to the whole Society, and the Constitution of the Government, as well as to every Individual Member of it; not breaking through the Limits of their Power, nor invading the Rights of their People; neither inventing new Pretensions of Prerogative, nor stretching those that do belong to them, to the Ruine of their Subjects: *Just* in distributing the Publick Rewards, with a due regard to mens Capacities and Merits; and even *Just* in that which to Good Kings is always the least acceptable Exercise of their Power; I mean, in punishing the froward and disobedient, when the ill Effects of their Lenity are visible; for there are Cases in which Gentleness to particular persons, becomes an Injustice to the whole Body. When Blood is shed, it cries against the Murderer, till it is pardoned; but then the Cry turns upon those that pardon it, and upon the Land that is *defiled with Blood*. There is after all, a Justice in shewing Mercy, as well as in punishing; otherwise Princes may fall into the Error of being *righteous overmuch*: And when the Motives for Mercy are brought near an Equality to those of the other Extream, the Ballance should ever turn to the merciful side. He understood Government well, that said, *Mercy and truth preserve the King, and his Throne is upheld by mercy*, Prov. 20:28.

This is the Character of a *Just Prince, who sitteth on the Throne of Judgment, and scattereth away all evil with his eyes*, Prov. 20:8. There

is a Majesty in Justice that makes all unrighteousness fly, and hide its face before it: It is *by righteousness that the Throne is established*, Proverb. 16: 12. When every man feels the Blessings of such a Ruler, all men are easie, and pursue their Industry, becaule they know they shall reap the Fruit of their Labour; and every man becomes a Guard to the Government, that finds himself guarded by it. It is neither the Discontents of a few ambitious and restless Spirits, nor the Practices of those who are corrupted by the Enemies of a State, that can throw it into Convulsions, as long as Justice and Righteousness issue out from the Throne in so free a course, that they run down like a River.

When *righteous lips are the delight of Kings*, Prov. 16. 13. and when the *wicked are put away from before them*, Prov. 25. 5. and when they esteem it *their honour to search out matters*, not being abused by bold Calumnies, or unjust Representations: When they relieve the Poor, and protect the Oppressed, then by a noble sort of Conquest and Enlargement of Empire and Prerogative, they become the absolute Masters of the Hearts and Hands of their Subjects: When instead of making their Will the Measure of the Law, they make the Law the Measure of their Will, they will then feel the easiness of Ruling justly, as sensibly as their People will the happiness of it; for here they will see their way very plain before them, whereas in all other paths they must be often divided between an irreconcilable variety of Interests and Passions.

But after all, though it is a great happiness when Rulers seem to have Justice so deeply rooted in their natures, that every act of Injustice is as a Violence done them; yet unless there is a more lasting Principle formed in them, their Noble and Vertuous Inclinations will be so often crossed by prevailing Interests, and they will find themselves so often beset with corrupt Men, who court forbidden Gain, and love the *wages of unrighteousness*, that it will not be possible for them to maintain their Integrity, if they have not a Principle within them of such force, that it bears all things down before it; and that is the *fear of God*: This will possess their minds with a secret awe of that Supreme Being, which sees *all things*, and discovers even *the hidden things of dishonesty*: This will accustom Princes to consider, that how much soever they may be raised above their Subjects, yet they are as nothing before that God, who as he set them up by his Providence, so he

he can pull them down at his pleasure. *He poureth contempt upon Princes*; Psalm. 107. 40. and when he blasts the Counsels, and intends to defeat the Designs of the Greatest and Loftiest Monarchs, how easily do Crowns fall and Thrones shake? This *fear of God* will make Princes often remember, even in the Pride of all their Glory, that though then they look *like Gods*, yet they must *die like Men*; Psal. 82. 6, 7. this Prospect will make them think sometimes on the melancholy Reflections which the approaches of Death will probably raise within them, if they at any time for the encrease of their Treasure, or their Power: or for any ambitious or ill Design, have perverted Judgment, or denied Justice; if they have shed Innocent Blood, or shut their Ears against the Cries of the miserable: The remembrance of these things will then raise Agonies in their Minds, which they will not be able to soften by any of all these Diversions with which they entertained them selves in their Health and flourishing Condition. The Violences that they have committed, and the Blood which they have shed, will then stick too close to their Thoughts to be easily shaken off by them: Or if they could be so charmed with the sweetness of Empire, that it should make them deaf to all Clamours in this World; yet as soon as their Souls pass out of their Bodies, they must leave their Crowns and all their Glory behind them, and go into a state where all the Distinctions that now look so gay and so shining will signifie nothing, unless it be to add to their Account, to encrease their Guilt, and to heighten their Condemnation. Then they must appear at a Tribunal, where there is no respect of Persons; where the Cries of those Widows and Orphans whom they either made, or oppressed, or at least refused to relieve, will be heard; and every one of those Complaints against which their Greatness secured them when on Earth, will be weighed in the Scales of Impartial Justice. Then those Princes who have hardened themselves against the Miseries of Mankind, against all that effusion of Blood and Desolation which their desire of Glory, their Ambition, or their Revenge occasioned in the unjust Wars which they have made, will find that they have a just and righteous God to deal with, that *accepteth not the Persons of Princes*, Job 34. 19. that *revengeeth Innocent Blood*, especially the *Blood of his Saints*, and that will *reward every man according*

according to his works. Mat. 16. 27. These are all Considerations of such mighty force, which rise out of the *fear of God*, that if Princes do not shut them quite out of their minds, they will certainly make all their Maxims of Justice so much the firmer, as they are grafted upon this stock, and nourished with these and such like Reflections.

Ruling in the fear of the Lord, does not only import, that this is the Prince's secret Motive and constant Remembrancer, but that the *Fear of God* becomes the Rule of the Government, as well as the Principle of him that governs. Few Princes are so bad as to own that they have no regard to Religion in any thing they do: It is a strong temptation to their Subjects to shake off their Yoke, when they openly shake off God's: but as many as make a pretence of their Religion, do with it, as they do who wear Masks, which rather hide than disguise them; for none take the Vizar for the true Face, though it covers it: They use Religion for the hiding some secret deformities; but the Mask is so coarse, that though all Men cannot see what is under it, yet they plainly discern that it is but a Mask. Hypocrisie, as all other things that we wear, is capable of new Fashions, and of different Modes; and the Skill of those who use it, is to find out that which is most likely to take, and to suit it with the present occasion. In one Age, the endowing of Monasteries, and the building of Churches, could sanctifie the greatest Monsters: The Devotion of another Age, was the carrying over vast Armies to be destroyed in the *Holy Land*: At another time, a Zeal for some new Doctrine, or controverted piece of Worship was the Holiness in Vogue: The being given up blindly to a Confessor, the breaking of Faith, and the persecuting of Hereticks, to signifie a zeal for Holy Church, can serve with some to cover a multitude of Sins. At some times the Praying and Preaching with Appearances of Fervour and Devotion, has a Charm that carries Nations after it: And a Rigour in supporting Established Forms, and the ruining of such as do not comply with them, will also draw to it selfs great Applauses. After all these Mistakes or Impostures, the true Notion of *ruling in the fear of the Lord*, is when Princes make that Religion which God has revealed, the chief mark and measure of their whole Government: When the encouraging and promoting

moting of a vigorous Piety, and the maintaining of True Religion, by ways and means suitable to it, is the chief design of their Rule: When Impiety and vice are punished, and Error is repressed, but without the ruine of such as are involved in it: When the decency of the Worship of God is kept up, without adulterating it with Superstition: When Order is carried on in the Church of God, without Tyranny: And above all, when Princes are in their own deportment, Examples of the *Fear of God*, but without Affectation? and when it is visible that they *honour those that fear the Lord*, and that *vile men are despised by them*, *Psalm 5. 4.* then do they truly Rule in the *Fear of God*. When we see Kings become thus truly Christian Philosophers, then we may expect to see the City of God, the *New Jerusalem*, quickly come down from Heaven to settle among us; and if we may look for a glorious Thousand Years on Earth, we may reckon that it is not far from us, when we see Kings fall down before him that is the *King of Kings*, and offer up their Crowns to him by whom they Reign. Kings have one Prerogative which few of them are indeed willing to use much, and that is, the Converting the World, not by Dragoons, Sanguinary Laws, or Cruel Edicts; but by Examples of true Religion, and good Life. Kings Examples have an Efficacy which few can resist, and none will affect to do it. If Events that happen seldom, may be called *Miracles*, this may well deserve that Name; and indeed considering that as Princes carry the Frailties of Human Nature about them, so they have Temptations ever near them to work on these, that the constant distraction of Affairs dissipates their Thoughts, and exhausts their Spirits, that they are always encompassed with Flatterers, who are on all Occasions contriving how they may please them, even when it is by deceiving them, and that pleasures of all sorts wait on them and follow them; when all this is laid together, the Miracle of a truly Religious Prince is perhaps none of the smallest effects of Omnipotence, and it runs not the hazard of losing its Value by being shewed too often.

But when there is a solid Morality and genuine Piety, well tempered and mixed together, and that Princes are both *Just* and *Fearing God*, and that they govern Themselves and their People by those measures, then we must acknowledg that not only the Figures which are here made

use of, tho with never so much Beauty, but all that the Richest Fancy can invent, come far short of setting forth the Happiness of being under such a Government. The Injust Vexations of Law-Suits would cease, if it appeared that *Righteousness* sat in the place of *Jndgment*, and that the *Persons of the Rich* were not Regarded, nor their Presents accepted: Men durst not offend, if they saw that nothing could redeem them from deserved punishments: Factions and Animosities could not be kept up in Cities and Communities, if those indirect Arts by which they might hope to bias the Prince were cut off; When true Merit is the sure way to high Dignities, then Men will take to the long, tho slow Method of honest Industry, instead of the shorter way of Flattery and Importunity. When Men are put out of countenance that will be vicious, and are denied alle those Favours that the Prince will have to be the portion of the Vertuoust When the Decencies of Vertue are more necessary to make a Man look well at Court, than the wearing Cloaths in Fashion; when Atheism and Impiety are Things which Princes cannot bear; when a drunken Man is a most loathsom sight, and Oaths and Curses are the most offensive sounds to them; when Slanders, Lies and Calumnies can only hurt those that make them, and next to the Authors, those that scatter them about. When alle these, or if that is too much to be hoped for, when but some of them appear in the conduct of Government. Men will be tempted to doubt whether they should wish to tarry still here on Earth, or not: How many of our Passions would then fall off, when we should have no more occasion for them, nor provocations to them: Fears and Jealousies Discontent and Ill nature could not thrive, as they do, if all that Nourishment which the Errours of Government afford them, were withdrawn.

But to compleat the Picture, I shall only set before you the different State of the *Romans*, when they passed from the Vicious Reigns of such Execrable Monsters as *Tiberius*, *Caligula*, *Nero*, and *Domitian*, to the happy times of *Trajan*, *Hadrian*, *Antonine*, but above all, of that most sublime pattern of Vertue and Philosophy, *Marcus Aurelius*. In the former, nothing was studied but Vice and pleasure: Nothing could raise a Man but sordid Flattery, and an obsequious courting of every Creature of Fortune and Favour. The whole business of the Court was to corrupt and debase the Senate; and to destroy those who still retained
such

such a Tincture of their ancient Liberty, that nothing could subdue it : Spies and Informers where every where imployed, to engage Men into Discourses and Plots , which were to be betrayed , while corrupt Judges and false Witnesses were sure to carry all things before them. And their very Religion , false as it was, was vitiated by the impudent mixures of the most shameful Idolatry, while their Emperours that were the reproaches of Humane Nature, had divine Adorations payed them, and that with all the refinings and profusion of Pomp in it, that nauseous Flattery could invent. Their great City was laid in Ashes , only to gratify the wild Frolicks of an extravagant Tyrant ; the Warlike Spirit of the *Romans* was enervated by Luxury and dissoluteness ; and the Empire it self was exposed, first to the contempt , and then to the Inroads of their formerly subdued Provinces, while a publick Spectacle, an Entertainment, or a Play, were the only cares of a Court that hated the very appearances of Vertue, and yet still fancied it self to be the Terrour and Wonder of the World, till a fatal Revolution, or a deadly stroke awakened Men out of their Lethargy.

But this side of the Picture , is not more hideous than the other is Glorious ; the return of good Princes put a New Face on the whole Empire : Their Ancient Sense of Liberty was revived, which must ever carry with it, all that is Great, or Noble in humane Nature ; with it Learning and good Sense, wit and Eloquence, were again recovered, Frugality and Sobriety were again honoured, and a Modesty and Simplicity of living shined afresh : Truth and Vertue, and Philosophy it self began to reign. *Tacitus* and *Plutarch*, *Epictetus*, and beyond them all *Marcus Aurelius* himself, were such Men , that one would bless a whole Age, if it should but produce one of that force. *Marcus* in a Reign of almost twenty Years continuance, is represented by all the writers of the succeeding as well as of his own Age, as so perfect a Pattern , that there never appeared either in his private Deportment, or in his Government, one single Blemish. He was never once seen either transported with Anger or with Joy. He was never charged with one Light Word, or any one Rash Action. He lived in a perpetual Application to the Affairs of the Empire, and in the intervals of business, even in his Expeditions and Camps, he was imployed in those profound Meditations of Philosophy which carry this Noble Title *Of Himself to Himself*, and in which we see the most natural and unaffected con-

16 *A Sermon at the Coronation of K. William and Q. Mary.*

contempt of all things, besides Vertue and Goodness, expressed with the greatest force, and yet with the truest simplicity of any thing that Antiquity has left us.

Under such Princes, the *Romans* could not but recover their ancient Discipline, and their wonted Valour, and the Empire was again raised to its former Lustre, and regained its lost Authority; but which was much more, in them the World saw patterns of Vertue, that were too high for that corrupt Religion which then prevailed; and this perhaps disposed it not a little for Christianity, that could not only consist with such Morals, but carry them far higher.

If the opposition of these two different Scenes of Government affect this Auditory, and if the change seems sensible, when set out in Words, it is You, GREAT SOVERAIGNS, that must give this its best Light and utmost Force. It is from you that we expect the Glorious Reverse of all cloudy days. You have been hitherto our Hope and our Desire: You must now become *our Glory and Crown of rejoicing*, Ordinary Vertues in You, will fall so far short of our hopes, that we shall be tempted almost to think them *Vices*. It is in Your Persons, and under Your Reign, that we hope to see an opening to a Glorious Scene, which seems approaching. May You not only accomplish, but exceed even our wishes. May You be long happy in one another. May You Reign long in your Persons, and much longer in a glorious posterity. May You be long the Support of the Church of God, and the Terrour of all its Enemies. May you be ever happy in obedient Subjects, in wise Counsellours, and faithful Allies: May your Fleets be prosperous, and your Armies Victorious. But may You soon have cause to use neither; by settling both at Home and Abroad, a firm and just Peace, and by securing the Quiet of *Europe* from those who have so often, with so little regard to the Faith of Treaties, and now at last beyond all former Examples, disturbed it. In order to the obtaining all these Blessings, and in Conclusion a sure, tho' a late admittance to the Kingdom Above, where you shall exchange these Crowns with a more lasting, as well as a more glorious One, May not only this Auditory, but the whole Nation join with united Voices, and inflamed Hearts, in saying

God Save King William and Queen Mary.

F I N I S.